



WSAHQ

Washington State Association for Healthcare Quality

NEWSLETTER—DECEMBER 2007

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Job Postings are
FREE for the
introductory
period through
May 1, 2008.

Go to www.wsahq.org,
then
Career Opportunities to
the job posting link



If you have events,
news or other con-
tent that members
may find useful,
please email them

to:
communica-
tions@wsahq.org

President's Message

By: Celeste Derheimer
president@wsahq.org



Season's Greetings!

As the end of my term as WSAHQ President draws near I am filled with a sense of sadness mixed with incredible optimism. Sad that circumstances prevented us from accomplishing all we had hoped for this year — and optimism when I consider the strong foundation that has been built — and the energy and experience our new board members will bring. So — without further ado — I'd like to introduce the 2008 WSAHQ Board members to you!

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| o Past-President: Celeste Derheimer | o Treasurer-Elect: Deena Rauch |
| o President: Jackie Huck | o Secretary: Jennifer McMakin |
| o President-Elect: Dorcus Hirzel | o Education Chair: Laura Kinney |
| o Treasurer: Karen Benson | o Eastern WA Liaison: Kellie Hamblin |

WSAHQ is a state-wide organization, and yet most of our activities and focus have been on the western portion of the state. We are thrilled to now have three members on our Board from the eastern part of our state: **Dorcus Hirzel**, President-Elect and **Deena Rauch**, Treasurer-Elect, are both from Spokane. **Kellie Hamblin**, from Southeast WA, has pitched in where ever needed this year (thank you, Kellie!), will remain as Eastern WA Liaison. Their involvement with the Board should help us truly become a state-wide organization!! **Jennifer McMakin**, our new secretary, is from Gig Harbor and will bring the South Sound perspective.

It has been a real pleasure working with **Jackie Huck**, who will take the helm as President in 2008 and **Karen Benson**, who will move into the Treasurer position. I'd also like to thank Past-President, **Robin Cook**, Communication Liaison, **David Glickman**, Education Chair, **Laura Kinney** (who will remain in that position), and Treasurer, **Sharon Brooks** for their contributions to the association. Sharon Brooks in particular has gone above and beyond, serving three years as Treasurer. Her meticulous record-keeping provided a sound fiduciary base that Karen has been able to build on.

As I wrap up this year—mostly I am thankful; thankful we had the right people on the Board to take on the challenges we encountered — do what had to be done — and get a much needed foundation in place so we can move forward.

**May the holidays be safe and happy
for you and yours.**
Warm regards, *Celeste*



From the National Association

From: <http://www.nahq.org>



Re-Membering Our Members

NAHQ is committed to ensuring that our members have ready access to information on benefits, services, and volunteer opportunities. To remain the association of choice for healthcare quality professionals, we realize how important it is to “re-member” our members. NAHQ strives to be a user-friendly association for members and other customers who rely on us to be the source for education, research, networking, and certification.

A personal welcome. To welcome new NAHQ members, a pilot program was launched to have state presidents in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas, as well as quality volunteers in other states, reach out to all new members in their first quarter of membership. If members cannot be personally reached, a detailed voice message is left for them. New members say that they are delighted with these calls—and the personalized attention.

Virtual receptions. Virtual receptions for new members were also piloted in 2006. Led by board members and staff, these online teleconferences educate members on NAHQ’s history, mission, and membership composition, as well as inform them about the Healthcare Quality Certification Board, annual conference, and other professional development opportunities. A Quality Volunteer or board member also describes the Quality Volunteer Board (QVB) and volunteer opportunities to the new member. These virtual receptions have proven a valuable means for recruiting new volunteers and have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants.

Redesigned Web site. A completely redesigned Web site was launched in September. Not only does it sport the association’s new look (check out our stylish new logo), but it also makes navigation easier. The new site further simplifies the processes for joining NAHQ or renewing membership, features a calendar of events with important deadlines, includes a member directory and Members Listserv, and showcases the QVB in NAHQ Plus, its members-only section. Meanwhile, *NAHQ E-News*, launched in September, keeps members abreast of the latest trends and news in quality.

Peer conference guides. NAHQ now provides peer conference guides for first-time conference attendees. The guides, who are experienced conference attendees, greet newcomers at the reception for first-time attendees and answer their questions about the conference, educational sessions, and networking activities. In the future NAHQ plans to allow registrants to indicate their interest in having a peer conference guide.

Online volunteer profile. NAHQ also reengineered its online volunteer “show of interest” profile. Once registered with the QVB, volunteers can join the Quality Volunteer Listserv. Likewise, board members, team leaders, and others can easily query the QVB to match volunteers with team and project opportunities. Registering as a Quality Volunteer is a great way to join our growing ranks of active members.

Expect to see even more initiatives. Some areas ripe for consideration include developing special interest groups, recognizing tenure in the association, and providing more opportunities to apply for Healthcare Quality Foundation grants.



Getting to Know WSAHQ's 2008 Treasurer

An Interview with Karen Benson



Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born and raised on a ranch in Montana and still love the outdoors. I have four grown children and six grandchildren. My husband is retired (if you don't count playing golf as work).

Briefly describe your current work. Also tell a little about your career in health-care and why you chose this as a career.

I chose nursing because I always wanted to make a difference in some way in healthcare. I was raised in a very rural area and the closest healthcare was 25 miles away. Having literally ridden a horse in very deep snow all that distance to get care for my father when he broke his leg, I was aware of real healthcare access issues even at the age of 12.

I worked in small rural hospitals the first part of my nursing career and have been interested in improving patient outcomes and patient safety/risk management since the 1980's. When I was in graduate school, became interested in how we can use data to track and improve care. This led to the establishment of my own business in 1991. This is a consulting business doing project-related work that can be broadly described as healthcare informatics. The work is described in detail on the website: <http://www.healthdataconsult.com>.

As federal and state reporting became more complicated, I worked with various organizations to manage their data and meet reporting requirements. I also worked with these organizations, including government agencies, to implement databases and electronic medical records, to collect and organize healthcare business and clinical data. Recently, I have worked with several national and state groups (including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the Institute of Medicine, the State of Oregon, and the Rural Health Quality Network) to conduct research, collect and analyze data, and use that data to define and implement policies and procedures.

Why were you interested in serving on the WSAHQ Board? Do you have ideas for what you'd like to see the association accomplish in the near future?

I became involved in the WSAHQ Board as I wanted to make more of a difference at the state and local level. I had recently left positions of responsibility with the American College of Emergency Physicians and the National Association of Health Data Organizations (NAHDO) and felt I would have the time to commit to the WSAHQ Board.

I believe that WSAHQ is at the point where they can take a giant leap forward to become more professional and offer additional educational and networking opportunities to quality professionals. When reviewing the original goal of improving healthcare, I realized that, while there are basics of quality that I apply in software development and testing and other work (LEAN, Six Sigma), there are some unique aspects to the healthcare quality work that I believe are addressed by WSAHQ and not in depth by the other professional associations I belong to.

What are your other interests and hobbies?

I am a Master Gardener and devote considerable volunteer time to the Master Gardener work. I have a large garden that is constantly being reworked as I never have enough room for new plants I simply MUST have. I also love to read and spend time with my grandchildren going to the zoo, museums, and the closest playground.

WSAHQ Upcoming Events

Pursuing Process Excellence in Health Care

with Kevin McManus

January 10th, 2008

Coast Bellevue Hotel

625 116th Avenue Northeast Bellevue, WA 98122

This exercise-intensive workshop is designed to help you assess strengths and opportunities for improvement in your current health care work systems and develop an action plan for making approaches more effective, in an effort to obtain sustainable results. In this workshop you will learn :

- o How to determine what is truly important to your organization
- o The key processes and metrics you can use to achieve your performance goals
- o Improvement actions that would most benefit your own pursuit for process excellence

REGISTRATION AND FEES

Register Online at www.wsahq.org

Members..... \$150

WSAHQ and Quality Alliance States

Non-Members.....\$225

Join WSAHQ for \$50 & pay the member rate. Save \$25!

Final day to register is January 7th

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions regarding this event, please contact:

Laura Kinney, WSAHQ Education Chair

Laura.Kinney@multicare.org

(425.761.8409)